

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims shall replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-51 (Canceled)

52. (Currently amended) A method of operation of an electronic checkout system having a point of sale (POS) terminal coupled to a data reader and an EAS system, the method comprising:

operating in an automatic activation mode whereby the EAS system is automatically activated in response to a signal from the data reader of good read of a product code;

operating in a manual activation mode whereby the EAS system is manually activated by action of an operator;

detecting a manual activation of the EAS system to deactivate an EAS tag; and

storing an indication ~~of the detected~~that a manual activation, as distinguished from an automatic activation, of the EAS system has been detected.

53. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 52 wherein said detecting step occurs in the EAS system and further comprising transmitting an indication ~~of that a the detected~~manual activation, as distinguished from an automatic activation, of the EAS system has been detected~~to the POS terminal or host system.~~

54. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 53 and further comprising storing an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system in the POS terminal or the host system in response to receiving the transmitted indication.

55. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 52 and further comprising:

identifying an operator logged into the POS system at a time the manual activation of the EAS system is detected; and
storing an identifier of the identified operator in association with the stored indication of the manual activation.

56. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 52 and further comprising:

determining a date and time when the manual activation, as distinguished from an automatic activation, of the EAS system is detected; and storing the determined date and time in association with the stored indication of the manual activation.

57. (Currently amended) A host notification method for use in an electronic checkout system that includes an optical code data reader and an electronic article surveillance (EAS) system, the data reader and the EAS system coupled to an electronic point-of-sale (POS) terminal, the method comprising the following steps:

detecting a manual deactivation attempt of the EAS system;
determining whether deactivation attempt was successful;
if the deactivation attempt was successful, transmitting an indication of the manual deactivation to the POS terminal or

host system, the indication of the manual deactivation comprising a data code ~~corresponding to~~ in the form of a predetermined machine readable optical code data.

Claims 58-59 (Canceled)

60. (Currently amended) A host notification method according to claim 57 wherein said predetermined machine readable optical code data comprises a specially reserved universal product code.

61. (Previously presented) A host notification method according to claim 57 and further comprising, responsive to receiving the indication of the manual deactivation, creating a record of the manual deactivation event.

62. (Previously presented) A host notification method according to claim 57 and further comprising, in the POS, responsive to receiving the indication of the manual deactivation, transmitting a record of the manual deactivation event to a server or backroom controller.

Claims 63-66 (Canceled)

67. (Previously presented) A host communication method for use in an electronic checkout system that includes a data reader to acquire product identification and an electronic tag system, the data reader and the electronic tag system coupled to an electronic host system, the method comprising the following steps:

detecting a predetermined event of the data reader or the electronic tag system;

selecting a data code corresponding to a machine readable, special optical code, the data code corresponding to the detected event; and

transmitting the selected special optical code to the host system as a special code that does not identify a product.

68. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the host system comprises a point-of-sale (POS) terminal.

69. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the host system comprises a host computer.

70. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the data reader comprises an optical scanner and the detected event is an indication of a hardware failure.

71. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the detected event is a status of the electronic tag system.

72. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected event comprises an electronic tag deactivation failed event.

73. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected event comprises a successful deactivation event.

74. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected event comprises an attempted deactivation event.

75. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected event comprises a successful manual deactivation event.

76. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the data reader comprises a plurality of sensors, and wherein the detected event comprises which of the plurality of sensors acquired the product data.

77. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67, further comprising
providing multiple sensor windows in the data reader;
reading data from an article via the data reader;
determining which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data, wherein the detected event comprises which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

78. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising determining an indication of a position of the article responsive to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

79. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising determining an indication of an orientation of the article responsive to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

80. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising:

selecting a special optical code as a predetermined data code corresponding to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the label data; and

transmitting the selected special optical code to the host system as a special code that identifies which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the label data.

81. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 80 wherein the data reader system includes at least one optical sensor.

82. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 80 wherein the data reader system includes at least one RFID sensor.

83. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 80 wherein the POS terminal serves as the host.

84. (Currently amended) A method ~~according to claim 53~~ of operation of an electronic checkout system having a point of sale (POS) terminal coupled to a data reader and an EAS system, the method comprising:

operating in an automatic activation mode whereby the EAS system is automatically activated in response to a signal from the data reader of good read of a product code;

operating in a manual activation mode whereby the EAS system is manually activated by action of an operator;

detecting a manual activation of the EAS system to deactivate an EAS tag; and

storing an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system,

wherein said detecting step occurs in the EAS system and further comprising transmitting an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system to the POS terminal or host system,

wherein the step of transmitting an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system to the POS terminal or host system comprises (a) selecting a special data code, corresponding to a machine readable optical code but distinguishable by the POS terminal or host system from a product code, as a predetermined data code corresponding to the detected manual activation and (b) transmitting the special data code from the data reader to the POS terminal or host system.

85. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the detected event comprises a hardware failure.

86. (Previously presented) A host communication method according to claim 85 wherein the hardware failure comprises a failure in a power supply of the electronic tag system.